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Labor Age

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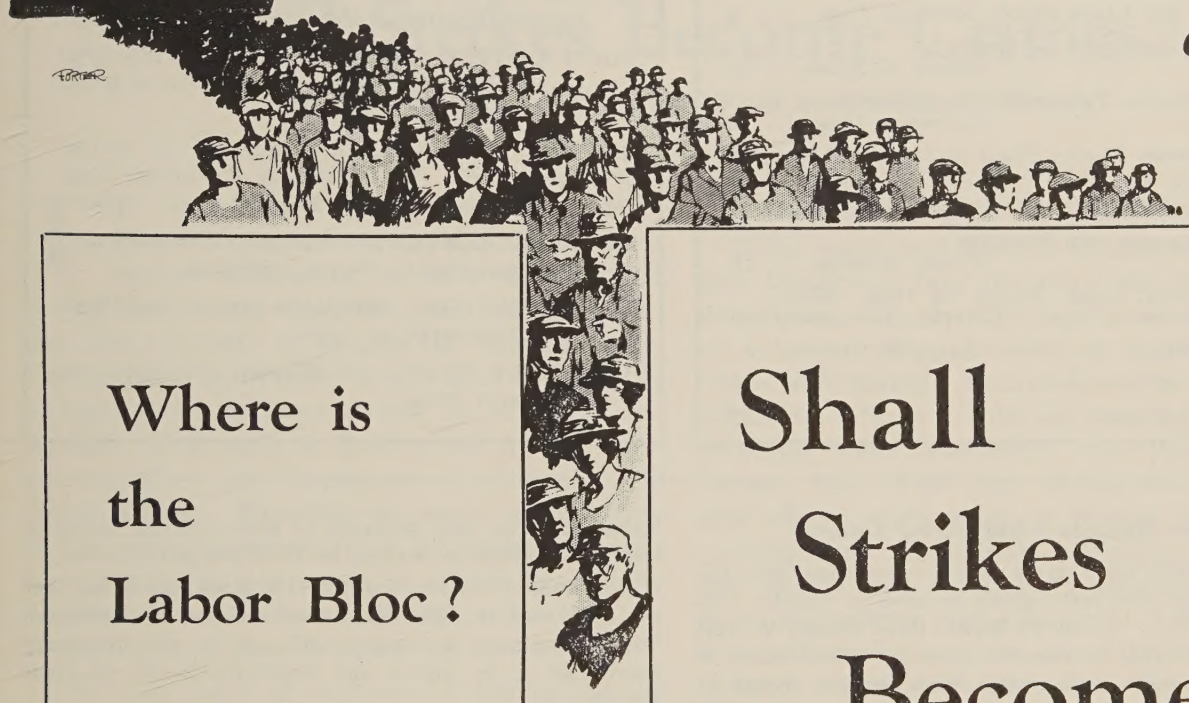

Where is the Labor Bloc?

Is There Enough to Go 'Round?

Shall Strikes Become Crimes?

John A. Fitch
George Lackland
F. M. O'Hanlon

Volume XI, No. 3 March, 1922

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Presenting all the facts about American labor, without regard to the interests of any party or section—Believing that the goal of the American labor movement lies in the socialization of industry.

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New Editors—Industrial Courts

LABOR AGE takes pleasure in announcing that the following have just agreed to serve as regular contributing editors: **Frank P. Walsh, Basil Manly, W. Jett Lauck.** The labor movement needs no introduction to any of these men. An article from the pen of one of them will appear in practically every issue of LABOR AGE.

The entire list of contributing editors, which includes **Morris Hillquit,** will be published in the next issue.

INDUSTRIAL Courts are the latest device of the anti-labor forces to crush the American labor movement. With "syndicalism" made criminal by statute in 34 states. Reaction now proceeds to declare trade unionism criminal in effect by making its chief weapon a crime.

Labor stands solidly against this move, asserting that the only way to industrial peace and order is through "the consent of the governed"—as in the voluntary boards set up by unions and employers in the garment industry.

IT is encouraging to note the conference of railway unions and miners called by President John L. Lewis in anticipation of the anti-union effort to drive a wedge between the railway men and the miners, which LABOR AGE foretold in its last issue. The danger is not yet over. The answer to it is—the demand for the socialization of railways and mines!

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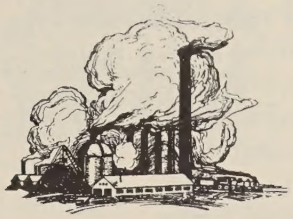


Shall Strikes Become Crimes?

The "Industrial Court" Movement and What it Means

By JOHN A. FITCH

THE movement for "industrial courts," which is the current euphemism for compulsory arbitration, has been making itself felt in this country since Congress averted a railway strike in 1916 by passing the Adamson Law. There was a good deal of talk then for a while of legislation to make strikes on railroads impossible, and early in 1917 a bill having such an objective was introduced in Congress. It failed to pass. Then the war came on, resulting in the appointment of labor adjustment boards in many industries, some of which practically wielded powers of compulsory arbitration, although without specific statutory justification.

The next wave of sentiment favoring the use of government coercion in labor disputes came during the period of acute industrial unrest that marked the years of 1919 and 1920. Many people were led to believe that a political revolution was lurking in the background of these industrial disputes, and that stern repression was the proper way to deal with them. It was at this time that Senator Poindexter, of Washington, introduced a bill in the United States Senate, outlawing strikes on railroads. Senator Cummins in his draft of the Railway Transportation Act, which passed the United States Senate, made provision for fines and jail sentences as a punishment for strikes on railroads. These provisions were withdrawn when the bill went to conference, and the Esch-Cummins Transportation Act calls upon railroads and their employees to refer their disputes to the Railway Labor Board, but without any penalties if they neglect to do so.

Abolishing the Right to Strike

In the early part of 1920 compulsory arbitration became a fact for the first time in any American state by the enactment in Kansas of a law creating a court of industrial relations, and making strikes in certain essential industries illegal. Bills embodying the same principle were introduced that year in New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts. Several efforts were made in Illinois to secure a constitutional amendment providing for industrial courts with compulsory powers. None of these movements was successful, however, and Kansas remains as the one state with a full-fledged compulsory arbitration law. Back in 1915, following the coal strike in the southern counties of the state, a law was passed in Colorado placing limitations on the right to strike, following the plan of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Law of Canada. This was the longest step that had been taken in this country in the direction of government interference with strikes until the passage of the Kansas law, and these two laws represent the high-water mark of the endeavor to place legal limitations on the right to strike.

Agitation in this field was rather quiet last year, but now, with the opening of the legislative session of 1922, the movement once more seems to be gathering headway. There is a bill pending before the Massachusetts Legislature, which, if enacted, will abolish the Minimum Wage Commission and the State Board of Conciliation and Arbitration and substitute for them both an industrial court almost identical

in organization and powers with the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations. There are two bills now before the Legislature of New York which are designed to limit or abolish altogether the right to strike. Neither of them seems to be patterned very closely after the Kansas Law, but one, if it should become a law, would considerably outdistance the Kansas statute. It is proposed to relegate strikes to the status of illegal conspiracies and to authorize the granting of an injunction against any proposed strike on the application of ten citizens. Doubtless this movement is making itself manifest in other state capitols, and there will probably be quite a crop of such bills before the legislative sessions are over.

"A Modified Form of Slavery"

It is interesting to note that spokesmen for the employing interests are on record in opposition to this form of governmental interference. James A. Emery, counsel to the National Association of Manufacturers, in an address delivered a few years ago, drew a distinction between private employment and industries "affected with a public interest." Representing primarily shippers, that is, consumers of transportation, he was not altogether sure that compulsory arbitration might not be desirable for railroads; but so far as "private employment" was concerned,

> "These deliberate and concerted stoppages of industry, while often entailing great losses to both parties, are, nevertheless, the inevitable incident of the exercise of elementary private rights. The state can neither compel individuals to give work, nor others to take it. The losses directly and indirectly suffered, however deplorable, are but incident to the exercise of personal rights, which, however directed by bad judgment, are part of the tax paid for the preservation of individual freedom. . . ."

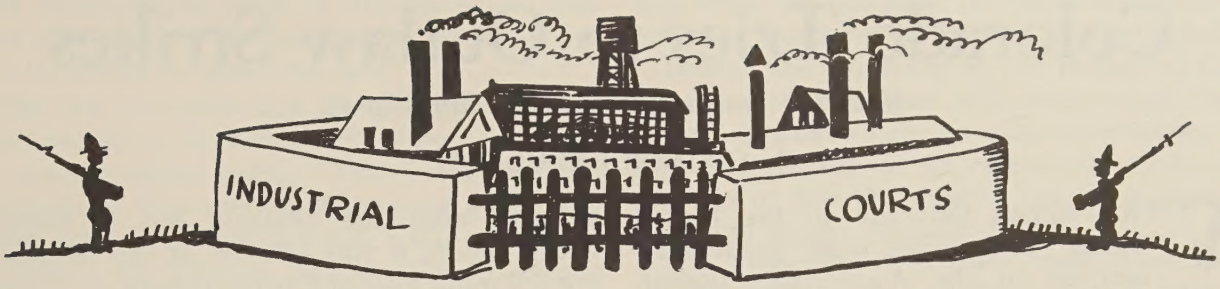
This is from an address delivered by Mr. Emery before the American Mining Congress, in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1914. Speaking before the same congress, Samuel O. Dunn, Editor of *Railway Age,* went even further. "Compulsory arbitration," he said, "involves first compelling the parties to submit their differences to arbitration, and second, compelling them to accept the award made. This is merely a modified form of slavery. To require capitalists to give employment to men or bodies of men whom they do not want at wages which they do not want to pay, or to require an individual workingman or a body of workingmen to work for concerns for which they do not want to work at wages which they do not want to accept, is inconsistent with enlightened ideas of liberty."

It may be assumed that these statements are fairly representative of intelligent opinion among American employers. It needs no citation of authorities to show that American labor is opposed to compulsory arbitration. Since there is, however, a considerable body of opinion not representative either of labor or of the more important employing groups which is in favor of compulsory arbitration, it may be useful to consider briefly some objections to that form of governmental interference from the standpoint of public policy.

Absence of Fundamental Principles

In the first place, the idea that there is an analogy between the adjudication of private disputes in established courts of law and of labor controversies in so-called industrial courts, is wholly a mistaken one. The civil and criminal cases which come up for settlement in courts of law are not ordinarily determined by individual caprice. The judge is bound, not only by the facts, but by the written law and by principles of jurisprudence known and understood throughout the legal profession. The judge of the industrial court will have to settle questions in accordance with his own judgment or conscience and without reference either to the statutes or to any settled body of principles, for neither exist.

In England a so-called industrial court was created in 1919, having certain powers of compulsory investigation, but no power with respect to enforcement of its awards. The president of this court, in writing about it recently, recognized the fact that fundamental principles do not exist in this field, and expressed the hope that the court might build up a body of common law that would be applicable to industrial disputes. He pointed out, however, that it is impossible to build up such a body of principles with respect to many of the controversies between employer and employee. "An industrial court," he said, "is unlike a court of law, which today applies to the cases submitted to it principles and rules which are already to be found in or inferred from statutes and previous recorded decisions. By no ingenuity can 'au-



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thority' be discovered for a view on the ordinary claim for an increase or reduction in a rate of wages."

Compulsory Arbitration Has Failed

In the second place, compulsory arbitration, where it has been tried, has been proved a failure. It has not stopped strikes in New Zealand or Australia. In Great Britain during the war, when strikes in munitions factories were prohibited, there were as many strikes in these industries as in other employments, and in the last years of the war they were as numerous as they had been before the restrictions were imposed. In Kansas there have been repeated strikes, despite the compulsory arbitration of the Industrial Court Law. The law was intended primarily to maintain peace in the coal industry. Yet thousands of miners struck lately in Kansas, and the coal fields have been the scene of turbulence ever since the passage of the law. Even the New York *Times* admits that "those who looked to the Kansas Industrial Court . . . as a means of ending all labor strife, have been disappointed." The *Times* points out that the Attorney-General of Kansas has had recourse to the Vagrancy Law in his attempt to deal with strikes, quoting him as saying in explanation of his action, "The law contemplates that every able-bodied man shall work if work is obtainable in this community."

"That," says the *Times*, "can only mean forced labor. For once Mr. Gompers has the color of a pretext for his long familiar outcry against 'enslaving' the workers."

Even if it were possible to make an end of strikes by threatening with fines and jail sentences those who would otherwise resort to that weapon, the result, instead of promoting the best interests of the community as the promoters of compulsion so fondly believe, would have the reverse effect. A socially healthy community is one made up of strong, self-reliant and self-controlled citizens. Compare the peace that prevails today in the men's clothing industry in the great clothing centers of America under machinery for the adjustment of disputes established by the workers themselves, with the sort of peace that exists in Kansas under the machinery created by the state. How remarkable a commentary on human nature it is that some of the people who are endeavoring to foist upon the workers the impossible program of negation and coercion implied in the Industrial Court Law, with its certainty of continued strife, are exactly the people who would destroy the impartial machinery of the clothing industry with its constructive and positive achievements in the establishment of a just and self-respecting peace!

Would Establish a Fixed Status

Finally, compulsory arbitration is undesirable because it would tend to establish a fixed status for the working class. It would set limits to their achievement. It would tend to perpetuate the existing uncertainties in the wage earner's relation to his job, which constitute the principal basis and explanation for industrial strife. The wage earners are a group of human beings, in all respects like other human beings, so far as spiritual and physical equipment is concerned, but in their economic relationships set apart and hedged about with restrictions. It is the business of organized labor to break down the economic barriers which have set this class apart. Theirs is the task that has always been the task of the leaders of the common people, the unprivileged and forgotten masses, in their long and painful journey upward from slavery and exploitation toward freedom and the possession of established rights. Organized labor is an inevitable part of this world-old movement —a movement that is instinctive and often as unconscious as the forces of gravitation. It is this very unconsciousness and inevitability, I suspect, that will bring to naught all schemes of compulsory arbitration.

Colorado Tries to Outlaw Strikes

How the Industrial Commission Works

By GEORGE LACKLAND

WITH "Annex Colorado to the United States" as a slogan, 5,000 workers assembled in the Auditorium, Denver, Sunday, January 29, 1922, to protest against the alliance of the state authorities with business interests.

The following resolution was passed unanimously:

"At this mass meeting of protest here assembled, this 29th day of January, 1922, we, 5,000 workingmen and women in the city of Denver, declare that:

"The State Industrial Commission has shown by its decidedly partial action that it is but another agency in the hands of capitalistic interests, serving them as a means of further subjecting the workers to the dictates of exploiting employers and profiteers.

"That the use to which the Colorado Rangers have been put in the southern coal fields has shown the armed forces of the state to be a private army of corporation interests, maintained at the expense of the taxpayers of this state for the purpose of intimidating honest men and women and coercing them into involuntary servitude under most oppressive conditions and for a wage of mere existence.

"That by conforming to the orders of such capitalistic agencies as the Industrial Commission, anti-strike laws, court injunctions, military law, etc., we invite the destruction of our unions and curtailment of our rights.

"We declare that all people who by brain and brawn do useful work, cannot expect assistance in the maintenance of their rights and welfare outside of their own ranks; therefore we do most heartily endorse the heroic action of Timothy McCreash and the striking employees of the packing houses of this city and elsewhere. We demand the release of such of them as are now imprisoned because they dared to stand and fight for their just rights."

The resolution then concluded with the formation of a committee of one hundred to prepare for political action at the coming election.

Timothy McCreash was the organizer for the Meat Cutters' organization, who was jailed for sixty days, together with a number of packing house employees who refused to obey an injunction ordering them to call off the strike. The injunction was requested by the Colorado Industrial Commission.

A Colorado Fuel and Iron Co. Law?

The Colorado Industrial Commission Law was passed in 1915, following the industrial conflict that occurred in Southern Colorado. It was modeled after the Lemieux Act of Canada. Many believe it was enacted at the request of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. It would seem that there would be some connection between the facts that McKenzie King, present Premier of Canada, was the author of the Lemieux Act and also the originator of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company's famous Industrial Plan.

Commission Gets More Authority

The act was amended in 1921, at the request of the Industrial Commissioners, who request more definite authority for the Commission.

The main articles of contention are Sections 29-33, which provide:

1. That employers and employees shall give the Industrial Commission and each other thirty days' notice of an impending strike or lockout.

2. It shall be unlawful for any employer to declare a lockout or for employee to go on strike while Industrial Commission is making an investigation.

3. Employers causing a lockout contrary to the provisions of this act shall be fined "not more than $1,000 or by imprisonment in the county jail of not more than six months, or both." The penalty for strikers violating the act is "not more than $50 and six months' imprisonment in the county jail, or both."

4. "Any person who incites, encourages or aids in any manner any employer to declare or continue a lockout, or any employee to go or continue on strike, contrary to the provisions of this act, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars ($1,000), or by imprisonment in the county jail for a term of not more than six months, or both such fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court."

Is the Law Constitutional?

The constitutionality of the law has never been tested before a higher court. Some of the international labor organizations are making preparation to test the same before the United States Supreme Court. E. P. Costigan, in 1916, declared before the Colorado Bar Association that the Industrial Commission Law was in direct conflict with the constitution, and his statement was unchallenged.

The Republican Party was responsible for the enactment of the law. In 1916 they made

their principles an issue in the campaign, and were defeated. The Democrats, however, refuse to amend or annul the law.

The law provides that there shall be three Commissioners, of whom only two can be of the same political party. There is a tacit understanding that one Commissioner shall represent labor, another capital, while the third represents the general public. The Commissioners are appointed by the Governor. Their terms are six years. Salaries are $4,000 per year and expenses.

Five reports have been issued by the Industrial Commission. They are very general. No statements are made concerning any mandatory action, which the Commission requested in a district court, or a statement of fines assessed.

The findings of the Commission, after or during the period of thirty days, are not binding upon either side unless they both agree to abide by the same in writing before the award is made. The second report of the Commission states that of "196 cases reported to the Commission 58 cases were settled by the award of the Commission or after conference with the Commission."

Workers Only Are Jailed

Labor complains that the law has not been applied equally to both sides. On numerous occasions the law has resulted in the imprisonment of strikers. No case, however, is on record of the jailing of an employer. Charges are made by labor leaders that fines levied against employers have been remitted by the Commission. Repeatedly at convention has labor gone on record as opposing the action of the Commissioners. There has been no instance that we can learn of any organized labor body endorsing the action of the Commissioners.

As part of the service rendered by the Industrial Commission as a basis for its decision, it has issued from time to time its judgment as to a living wage for a family of five. In December, 1921, its estimate for a living wage for a family of five was $1,169.06. In December, 1919, they granted $12 per month for rent. The wife of a wage-earner is allowed two hats in two years, each of which is to cost $2. The whole family is entitled as a yearly contribution to church, fraternal organizations and unions the sum of five dollars.

With such standards for "minimum subsistence level" as the basis for their decisions, it is not to be wondered at that labor is not satisfied.

During the existence of the Industrial Commission Colorado has witnessed many large strikes, among which were the steel strike, the coal strike and the Denver Tramway strike. The attitude of the Commission can be judged by their own report for 1918-19:

"The Commission immediately issued orders requiring the officers of the said union to recall strike orders made and requiring all coal mine employees to disobey any strike orders, and to make no change in working conditions pending such hearings by the Commission. The employers generally obeyed the injunction orders of the court and the orders of the Commission. In one or two coal camps the employees disregarded the law, and prosecutions were instituted under the criminal provisions of the law."

What happened to the employers who did not obey the law is not mentioned—for obvious reasons.

Lopsided Legislation

Back of all compulsory arbitration or Industrial Court laws is the idea that a strike is a crime. The thirty-day clause obviously cannot work any harm to the employer, but it may cause utter defeat to the worker. In the steel strike or packing house employees' strike, had the worker in Colorado obeyed the law he would have found himself aiding the corporation against his brother employees in other states. It does permit the employer to mobilize, as was demonstrated in the Tramway strike, where the company imported strikebreakers who were responsible for the shooting of several score unarmed citizens.

The lopsidedness of such legislation is easily seen when the coal companies can raise the price of coal without notice or permission from any one. But let the miners ask for a corresponding increase in pay and they must wait thirty days for the investigation of the Industrial Commission. "Would you favor a court or commission regulating the price of advertising or of circulation rates?" Governor Allen, of Kansas, was asked in the Denver Open Forum. "That is entirely different," was the Governor's response. Just so. The divine right of profiteering must not be interfered with on the part of the state. It is paternalism of the most dangerous order! "It is entirely different," however, when the workers, which represent over 90 per cent of the population, desire freedom in the sale of their only product—labor.

While the Industrial Commission was seeking to suppress industrial volcanoes by pouring salt thereon, a Federal court in Colorado issued an injunction upon the U. S. District Attorney, forbidding him from prosecuting a number of large department stores for profiteering. If it is the domain of a state to determine what is a fair wage, it equally behooves the state to determine what is a fair profit. Attempt this, and the fact will soon be discovered that the state *cannot successfully regulate an industry it does not own and control.*

tary aid to the Governor (alleged to have been written after a conference with officials of the C. F. and I.). When labor appeared before the Governor to protest against the martial law, its continuance was urged by the attorney for the C. F. and I. Yet officials of this corporation in New York City declared they were out of sympathy with the martial law. A few weeks ago the Governor announced "martial law will be withdrawn if the miners will call off the strike." Following this, miners went on strike in Routt County and the Rangers were dispatched. The Sheriff resented this, however, and the Rangers beat an undignified retreat.

Underwood and Underwood *I. P. E. U. 624*

LATEST INSTRUMENTS OF "INDUSTRIAL PEACE"

Army Tanks, used by militia in Newport, Ky., steel mill strike. Fitting means of carrying out injunctions and "industrial court" decrees.

Paralleling the Industrial Court with its injunctions and as a corollary thereto, Colorado has seen a tremendous effort at the organization of the state militia and state police known as the Colorado Rangers. Last year over $900,000 were spent in this state for militia. One of the Senators, when asked for an explanation, said: "We're going to put those damn labor agitators where they belong!"

In Southern Colorado

During the past two months martial law has reigned in Southern Colorado, where an illiterate Sheriff wrote a fine legal appeal for mili-

Behind all the surface moves is seen the inevitable conflict between property rights and human rights. Unless the latter are given the precedence there can be no permanent solution.

Eventually, class legislation of the type of Industrial Commissions and Industrial Courts will compel the workers to organize on the political field. Advocates of state compulsory arbitration don't want this. They decry it, but they are hastening the day. They are the fathers of class strife and class consciousness.

Will New York Coerce Workers?

By F. M. O'HANLON

THE much-heralded bill to prohibit strikes in New York State and give courts jurisdiction over labor unions and employers in certain industries was introduced in both houses Tuesday, February 7. It was introduced in the Senate by Senator Duell, Chairman of the Committee on Labor and Industry, and in the Assembly by Assemblyman C. P. Miller, Chairman of the Committee on Labor and Industry of the lower house. It was referred in both houses to committees of which the introducers are chairman. It was drafted by the New York Board of Trade and Transportation —a body already so conservative a number of years ago as to cause a portion of its members to break off and form the Merchants' Association as a "progressive" organization. The bill is to be heard in joint committee March 1.

About as Extreme as Can Be

This measure reads like a chapter out of the effort of the Bolsheviks to rule Russia. It provides that employers and employees who may differ as to wages or conditions of employment shall not have any communication with each other except by letter, and all copies of such correspondence shall be filed, sworn to, with the Industrial Commission. If no agreement is reached by such correspondence, the employees must remain at work and may not be discharged; but the employers or employees may sue in the Supreme Court to have that court decide the matters involved in the dispute.

The judgment is to be enforced by orders restraining employees from striking or employers from locking out employees, and no one is to strike or to ask another to strike. If employees or employers do not seek the courts to sue, a group of non-involved citizens may do the suing with the same results. The court may, in order to enforce its decision, also *take over any business and run it*, and it is further authorized to assume jurisdiction over labor unions and employers' associations, and direct their action as in receivership proceedings.

For the purposes of the bill, all industries relating to mining, transportation, food, fuel, clothing and shelter, and any thing or agency that may enter into their manufacture, transportation and distribution are declared to be affected with "public utility," and all employed in such industries included. This would mean most of the industries of the state. Violation is to be a misdemeanor.

Workers Oppose Measure

Members of the State Legislature should know that the 850,000 organized workers of the state are opposed to this measure. It is unfair alike to the employer and employee. It is undemocratic and un-American. It prevents worker and employer from settling differences in their own way. It is autocratic and not at all in harmony with our free institutions. It spells coercion in an exceedingly objectionable form.

Its real intent seems to be to keep wage-earners and employers continuously in the courts, whether either side wants to be or not, by permitting outsiders to interfere to this end. It emanates from the "open-shoppers," who, unable to defeat trade unionism on the industrial field, are endeavoring to throttle it by the court route, knowing that labor will be unable to bear the enormous expense involved.

Going Back 100 Years

They endeavored to disguise their "open-shop" propaganda by wrapping themselves in the American flag. They are disguising this vicious project under the false plea of assisting the public. Who constitutes the "public," anyway, if not the wage workers? And for the wage workers compulsory labor means slavery. Reaction, in this New York attempt and in the other efforts to throttle the workers, is trying to carry us back a hundred years or more, when to organize against the "masters" was a crime. It is hardly possible that such a theory can be put into effect in our largest state in the year 1922.

Where is the Labor Bloc?

Diligent Search Fails to Find It—Just Yet!

By LAURENCE TODD

WHEN, on the morning of February 9, some 1,350 skilled mechanics in the Washington Navy Yard were notified as a result of President Harding's order to stop naval construction, that they had been laid off, they did a strange thing.

Instead of proceeding to notify the chairman of a Labor Bloc or Labor Party group in the House or Senate of the situation, they called first upon the International Association of Machinists, and then upon a Maryland Republican Congressman from a nearby district, who had shown at least occasional interest in their grievances. Under this escort they sent their committee to the Navy Department to ask for protection of the means of livelihood of their families.

"No Place to Call Its Own"

For at least six months these navy yard workers had been facing the possibility of the blow which now fell upon them. In mid-winter they were informed that they must join the great army of the unemployed; that the government could not utilize its splendidly-equipped industrial plants, hitherto used for preparations for war, to produce supplies needed in the course of its business in time of peace. The administration was opposed to any further "government in business." The market for goods produced in private factories must not be impaired or disturbed, even by the utilization of the Government's own plants and trained personnel.

In all that six months, knowing their danger, and knowing the attitude of the administration and of Congress, these organized workers got no farther toward measures for their own protection than the launching of a campaign of petitions from the local lodges of the International Association of Machinists, addressed to the President, the Navy Department and to Congress, begging that Government supplies, such as metal filing cases, motor equipment, etc., be produced in the plants or portions of plants made idle by the disarmament program.

When the blow fell they could not appeal to a Labor Bloc in Congress to take up the situation. There was no Labor Bloc. There was not even a pro-labor group of any coherence. There was not an authoritative spokesman of Labor in the House or Senate. There were a few friends—some of them tried and gallant, such as LaFollette and Meyer London and Huddleston—but none accountable to organized labor. With all its millions of members and its network of local unions and its press in every corner of the land, the organized labor movement of the United States has no place in the national capital which it may call its own.

The Farm Bloc Shows the Way

The whole country knows of the Senate's agricultural bloc. That bi-partisan group of Senators from agricultural States, brought together through the influence of Ladd, Norris, LaFollette, Kenyon, Kendrick, Heflin and a few others, and centering its activities upon the Senate Committee on Agriculture, has for the moment answered the demand of the impoverished farmers of the nation for a voice in the national legislature. It has been tricked and betrayed, as when its Southern members were led off from support of the Norris foreign export credits bill by timely grants of credit to Southern cotton interests through the War Finance Corporation. It has been attacked, as was the case when the President summoned a national agricultural conference of picked men, chiefly conservatives, in the hope of discrediting the bloc and restoring his own prestige. It has been weakened, as when Kenyon was taken from its leadership to fill a place on the Federal circuit bench. But the bloc still lives, and its influence upon national policy appears likely to increase during the next year, rather than to diminish.

The farmers and the bloc demanded packer-control legislation, which had long been refused by the Old Guard. The bloc insisted, and the Old Guard compromised. In the same way the Kellogg compromise of the Norris export credits bill was granted by the Old Guard. Next came the Capper-Volstead bill, legalizing the activities of producers' co-operatives, and again the defiant resistance of the administration was softened to compromise under the tremendous

force which the farmer sentiment throughout the nation placed instinctively behind the bloc.

When President Harding ventured, in his speech to his own agricultural conference, to voice his resentment at the existence of this group of agrarian progressives in the Senate, his remark was met with chilly silence. Later, this conference overcame even the influence of the scores of business lobbyists in its membership, and adopted resolutions approving the bloc's achievements and purpose. The President himself was warned, by one of the bloc leaders, a Republican Senator, that but for the work of these rebels in the present Congress, the entire West would reject the candidates of his party next November.

The Strategy of Gompers' Leadership

Why, then, in the face of this demonstration of the readiness of the farmers to stand behind their champions in Congress, regardless of party affiliation, is there no Labor Bloc? Why has no effort been made to arouse the dozen members of the House who are members of trade unions to form an organized group, and to gather about them the scores of other members who are either sincerely sympathetic or are likely to gain political strength by throwing in their lot with the program of organized labor in Congress? And why is there no special group in the Senate, organized on the same lines?

The answer is two-fold. Organized labor is under the effective national leadership of Samuel Gompers, who holds all politicians in deep suspicion. He puts his faith in one institution only—the American Federation of Labor. He has never made a notable effort at mobilization of pro-labor sentiment in Congress, except on the occasion of a roll call on some measure affecting the existence of trade unions or of their right to function normally. As compared with the lobbying activities of organized commerce, organized manufactures, organized mining, organized shipping, or any of a dozen other groups which protect their property holdings by active persuasion at the capitol, the work there of the spokesmen of the A. F. of L. has been insignificant.

The second reason is, that, due to differences of opinion within the labor movement itself, organized labor in America has never really undertaken any political program. From time to time, and in some regions more than in others, a majority has espoused the non-partisan program of Mr. Gompers—"reward your friends and punish your enemies." From time to time, and especially in New York, Wisconsin, California and Ohio, the Socialist program has gained support from a very great proportion of organized labor. In 1920 it appeared for a time that Senator LaFollette would be nominated by the Farmer-Labor party convention at Chicago, and that the general resentment at the character of the Republican and Democratic tickets would be reflected in a tidal wave of labor votes for this new party. But LaFollette was not nominated, and the wave never arose.

Labor: 1912-1920

When the Progressive party was born at Chicago in 1912, with its platform taken largely from the platform of the Socialist party, it elected a score of members of the House, who proceeded to organize a separate group for the promotion of measures desired by organized labor and by other liberal elements. Its leaders —Murdock, Kelly, McDonald—were tireless in their attacks upon the policies of the Bourbon Democratic majority, led by Oscar Underwood. Two years later this group was dissolved, and in its place there came a group of some fifteen trade union members and sympathizers, centering upon the House Labor Committee.

Keating, of Colorado; Crosser, of Ohio; London, of New York; Casey, of Pennsylvania, and Nolan, of California, were among the men who supported Tavenner, of Illinois, in safeguarding trade unions against prosecution by the Department of Justice as being combinations in restraint of trade.

This group supported London's social insurance bill, and attacked the munitions combine, which was then engaged in whipping up "preparedness" sentiment. President Wilson's campaign managers in 1916 were largely instrumental in dissolving this group, by the easy expedient of permitting most of them to be beaten on the "loyalty" issue.

Since the election of 1916 the influence of organized labor in Congress has waned. The Seamen's Act had passed in the winter of 1914-15, thanks to the power of Senator LaFollette to prevent action on the administration's program, until this measure should be accepted. The Adamson Act was passed in the summer of 1916. That railroad crisis was one of the factors in the enthusiasm with which organized

business exterminated pro-labor candidates in the 1916 election. Incidentally, it is to be noted that from that period the Wilson administration drew away from its labor entanglements, and, except for the necessary compromises due to labor shortage in the midst of war, it never again disclosed a genuine interest in the workers' progress.

The Republican party management took full advantage of the alienation of Mr. Wilson from his own humanitarian program. As he drew off, it marched ahead into the depths of anti-laborism. Its policy in the Congress chosen in 1918, and in the more reactionary Congress chosen in 1920, has been one of assumption that the country is hostile to trade unionism and is ready to reward all possible encroachments upon the workers' standard of living, whether through executive, legislative or judicial acts.

The Labor Bloc Is Coming

The Labor Bloc is a thing of the future.

Its coming may be materially hastened by the Chicago conference of February 20. This was called by the sixteen standard railroad labor organizations, attended by some 200 representatives of national labor organizations, as well as spokesmen of the Socialist party, Farmer-Labor party, Non-partisan League, Committee of Forty-eight, and other groups identified with the political and economic aspirations of the producing class.

Its coming may be speeded by the conference between the rail workers and the organized coal miners, having in view the hope of a defensive alliance between the men in these basic industries. Congress may be master of the fate of every man in the service of either industry, and any broad program of defense must include measures for establishing representation for rail and mine labor in Congress.

The People's Legislative Service

Contributing also to the future rise of this labor group is the People's Legislative Service, of which Basil M. Manly, former joint chairman of the War Labor Board, and Arthur E. Holder, former legislative agent of the American Federation of Labor, are the active staff. It has been established by the railroad labor unions, together with the LaFollette group in Congress, to furnish to the latter the information necessary to make effective fights in the Senate and House against the anti-labor policy of the administration. Its researches have been of importance in the discussion of railroad legislation, revenue measures, farm credit and banking questions, and its value has been limited only by the fact that there are so few pro-labor men in either branch of the national legislature.

The Indianapolis News — *I. P. E. U., 624*

"FLIRTING"

The past year has witnessed the formation of a Legislative Council of the A. F. of L., comprising some thirty legislative agents and executives of various organizations affiliated with the Federation whose interests take them to the capitol from time to time. This Council has sought to reach a common program, and to exchange the information secured by its members as to the attitude of legislators on bills and policies. But because the Federation leadership is known to be opposed to political action, the Council has made only slight headway with the practical politicians at the capitol. They wait to be convinced that their opposition to the demands of these thirty legislative representatives of labor will be punished at the polls. So long as there is no positive labor bloc, no leadership in Congress speaking for the workers, the Legislative Council walks in quicksand.

Is There Enough to Go 'Round?

The National Income as Seen by Bureau of Economic Research

By ALBERT DeSILVER

HOW big is the national income? If it were equably distributed, would there be enough to give everybody a comfortable living? What share of it goes to labor and what to capital and management? How has the war affected these shares? What proportion of its product does labor really get? About all these questions heated controversy has raged for a long time. And unfortunately—or fortunately perhaps—there has existed little data to buttress either side to the argument. Both have been left to wallow in a mass of conjecture, supported only by isolated and almost necessarily unrepresentative examples.

Does Labor Get Enough?

Upon this hazy but vital subject the National Bureau of Economic Research has now shed much light. In its volume just issued (*Income in the United States,* Harcourt, Brace & Co.) will be found for the first time, estimates upon these matters not based merely upon conjecture and untested probability, but grounded upon a comprehensive survey of all available data and representing a year's work by four experts. The conclusions to be drawn from this collection of scientific estimates, oddly enough, will vary almost as widely as the speculations made from the preexisting inexact guesses. Thus, the February issue of *American Industries* carries an article upon the Bureau's work which concludes that "even under normal (pre-war) conditions labor not only got all that it earned, but also a good deal of what other people earned," and that the remedy is harder work for less pay. The worker will differ from this conclusion. He has bitter knowledge of the difficulty of matching wages against living costs and will not thus easily be convinced of the fundamental soundness of modern industry.

Before discussing conclusions, however, something should be said about the Bureau itself, its organization and the figures which have resulted from its study.

The staff is composed of such economists as Dr. Wesley C. Mitchell, Dr. Oswald W. Knauth, Dr. Wilford I. King and Mr. Frederick R. Macauley. The Board of Directors comprises many and divergent points of view on economic, industrial and financial affairs and includes, among others, George E. Roberts, Vice President of the National City Bank; Hugh Frayne, Organizer, American Federation of Labor; Edwin F. Gay, editor of the New York Evening Post, Harry W. Laidler, Research Director of the League for Industrial Democracy and one of the editors of *Labor Age,* Gray Silver, Secretary of the American Farm Bureau Federation and Professor David Friday, of the American Economic Association.

That such a staff and such a directorate should guarantee the careful and sound character of the study must go without saying. Upon the methods adopted none but the trained economist and statistician is competent to pass, but from the viewpoint of the lay reader the work itself is thoroughly convincing as to the technical skill and exhaustive study which have gone into it. Suffice it to say, that in arriving at its conclusions, the Bureau has made two different and independent estimates of the national income, one based upon the existing data as to incomes received and the other upon the value of the country's production from all available sources. These were made from entirely different data and when checked one against the other showed only slight variations. That the maxium variation was only 7% lends confidence in the soundness of the results reached.

The Size of Our National Income

The first question which such a study had to answer, of course, was how big is the national income. Its size slowly increased, the Bureau found from 28.8 billions of dollars in 1909 to 61 billions in 1918. But during this period the cost of living had increased by leaps and bounds and therefore the figures are translated into terms of dollars as of their 1913 purchasing power. When so translated we find that the national income had increased from 30.1 billions in 1909 to only 38.8 in 1918. And when the increase in population is considered the apparent gain is cut

still further, for in 1909 the per capita income (in 1913 dollars) was $333, while in 1918 it had gone to only $372 for each person.

Far more arresting, however, than the Bureau's figures as to the size of our income, are the estimates of its distribution. In determining the proportions of the national income which normally go to labor and capital, the Bureau used the data relating to income produced from mines, factories and land transportation. These industries were taken because it is in them principally that such a clear-cut division is made. They represent about a third of the country's entire income and it was found that the proportion paid out in wages and salaries has varied from 68.7% in 1909 to 77.3% in 1918, of which about 92% is annually paid to manual and clerical workers and about 8% to officials.

Shares for Labor and Capital

Now, what has been the effect of the war and the increased cost of living on labor's share of the goods which it produces. For this purpose the Bureau has again given us a table translated into dollars as of their 1913 purchasing power and this shows that, whereas the annual average earnings of the workers of all industries were $656 in 1909, they were increased to only $682 in 1918. This average was reached after taking in all of the 40 million persons who are gainfully employed and includes men, women and children workers alike. The average is further brought down by the inclusion of agricultural laborers also. But nevertheless after making all such allowances, the figure remains shockingly low, and must startle many complacent folk from their belief in the fundamental soundness of the present industrial order. Labor has held its own and gained a little during the war years, but what it has got, even when its gains are added, remains poignantly small.

A little cold comfort may perhaps be derived from the fact that during the same period the most prosperous 5% of income receivers (excluding farmers) lost ground. In 1913 this class of the community got 35% of the total national income. In 1916 their proportion had risen to 36%. But, during the war years, it fell steadily to 27% in 1919. During the same period the farmers made very substantial gains. In 1910 only 2% of all farmers received an income of over $2,000, while in 1919 that proportion had increased to 31%.

The Highest Ten Per Cent Receive One-Third

Perhaps the most interesting compilation of figures in the whole study is that which gives for the year 1918 a detailed distribution of the country's income among the thirty-seven and a half million persons (excluding soldiers, sailors and marines) who received it. These figures indicate that 1% of all income receivers in that years got 14% of the income; that 10% received 35% of the total, and that one-fifth of those gainfully employed got almost one-half of the whole nation's earnings. This illuminating estimate also shows that the 842,000 persons who received incomes of $5,000 or over in 1918, got a grand total of ten billion, seven hundred million dollars. If we do a little figuring and divide this sum among the 36.7 million persons who got less, we find that each of their incomes would have been increased by something over $290. That this sum would alleviate the privation in which many millions live cannot be doubted, but it is also true that it would not very greatly raise the general level of leisure and comfort. It suggests the notion that more is needed besides a fairer distribution of the national income; that in addition, the vast wastage of the modern industrial order must be eliminated and that the volume of present-day production itself must be increased. It is a demonstration indeed that our present economic order has not gotten most of us very far away from the possibility of anything better than a bare subsistence.

A Conservative's Conclusions

The Bureau itself has drawn no conclusions from the figures which it presents. They are left to speak for themselves. What conclusions are to be drawn will depend largely on the habit of mind and the point of view of the commentator. Thus, Mr. Walter R. Ingalls, writing in *American Industries*, points to the proportion of the value product of industry received by labor in wages. He observes that it is above 70% of the total and concludes that all is well with labor—indeed too well—and that in resisting wage-deflation, labor is selfishly seeking to take the bread out of somebody else's mouth, notably the farmer's. Such a conclusion is, of course, based upon the two assumptions that economic laws are more or less absolute in their nature and that it is not reasonable to expect any radical change for the better in the organization of our economic and industrial structure.

Underwood and Underwood

I. P. E. U., 62½

DOES LABOR GET ENOUGH?

Textile strikers in New Hampshire say it does not. This shows a mid-winter picket line before Amoskeag Mill, Manchester.

Labor Answers

If these assumptions are sound, Mr. Ingall's conclusion follows, but he must not be surprised if labor does not follow him. The worker who receives $682 a year (the 1918 average in terms of 1913 dollars) will take small comfort from the fact that he and his fellow workers are getting 70% of the total product. He cannot buy food and clothing with percentages. He can only buy them with money and he wants more money. He will insist that the test of our industrial organization is not so much what percentage of the product goes to the worker as whether or not the worker gets enough to provide for reasonable comfort and leisure. And if modern industry is not so organized that enough is produced for that purpose, the worker in the long run will insist that it be organized differently. He will agree with Mr. Ingalls that "the scale of living that a people can enjoy is what they can afford" and that "what they can afford depends upon what they produce." But he will ask, and ask it with some urgency, that the great waste of modern industry be prevented and that there be a reorganization upon whatever lines seem most likely to increase production.

Don't Lower Wages; Reduce Wastes

Now, in this difference of opinion, it seems to me that the worker is right and that Mr. Ingalls is wrong. I cannot feel that the so-called liquidation of labor costs is the remedy to the situation disclosed by the Bureau's study. To lower the worker's share will decrease his individual productivity and involve us in a vicious circle which should be avoided at all costs. Rather, we must eliminate waste, duplication and useless effort and we must find a way so to organize industry that the production of wealth will be increased and some of the inequalities of distribution eliminated. Very wise heads indeed, and much painstaking effort and study are needed to find the way out of this maze of baffling reality. What the answer is, I do not know. But that it is to be found away from the notion that our present economic order is final and completed, and in the direction of experimental reorganization, I cannot doubt. After all, the National Bureau of Economic Research has shown us how little we really have to lose by social experimenting. What we have to gain is measured only by the wit and resourcefulness of mankind in bending nature to his service.

Hunger Stalks Through West Virginia

By LAWRENCE DWYER

WEST VIRGINA today is more like a European province than an American state. Many of the active union men in the mining industry are under indictment for "treason" against the commonwealth, while "officers of the law," paid by the coal companies, are given carte blanche to intimidate the miners. In District 29, where unionism is strong, starvation and eviction have been the answer of the operators to the union men.

There are approximately 19,000 coal miners in this field. During the year 1921 they averaged 80 working days. Their average earnings for 1921 were $500. Hundreds worked only from 14 to 26 days during the whole year of 1921, and, about September 1, practically all the coal operations shut down completely. On the last pay day the companies deducted a month's rent in advance from the men's pay, with the result that numbers of men received no money at all.

Hunger Is Operators' Weapon

THE shutdown left practically all the miners without funds. As the coal industry is the only work in this territory, the miners began disposing of their household effects in order to get food for their families. About the first of November, the coal operators made a proposition to the miners that if the latter would accept reductions in wages to the amount of 35 per cent and agree to withdraw from organized labor, the owners would open up the mines again. The men refused this offer.

Then the officials of our district organization met the coal operators, asking if we could do anything which would make it possible for them to begin operations. Their reply was an emphatic "No!" They further said that the reduction of wages would not relieve the situation, as they could not sell their coal at any price. Despite this statement, the operators continually approached the men, telling them if they would accept reductions and give up the union, work would be forthcoming. The men refused, although suffering from lack of food and clothes.

Miners Ordered to Vacate Houses

WE sent out appeals for aid. Governor Morgan and the coal operators continually published in the papers of this state that the coal miners had plenty and needed no aid. The coal operators ordered hundreds of families to vacate their homes, and stated that if they did not do so their household effects would be thrown out on to the country road. The first evictions were to take place on January 17. I got in touch with President Harding and brought a committee of miners with me to Washington. We presented to our government representatives in Washington the eviction notices of the coal operators, and described the destitute conditions of the miners.

The government addressed a telegram to Governor Morgan, of West Virginia, advising him to use the powers of the state to stop evictions. They also sent a copy of that telegram to all the coal operators that had served eviction notices on the miners. The Governor and all the coal operators answered the telegram by denying the issuance of eviction notices.

Washington Investigates

THE United States Government then ordered a thorough investigation of the New River coal field, and F. G. Davis, of Pennsylvania, and H. B. Dynes, of Indiana, mediators of the Department of Labor, made a house-to-house investigation. After about two weeks' investigation, they decided to make their report back to Washington, and have just presented their report to Secretary James J. Davis.

Our appeal to President Harding did not stop the evictions, and the very next morning after the government's representatives put in their first day's investigations the people who had been crying through the West Virginia papers that the miners had plenty, organized an association of charities and sent out an appeal to the public, asking for donations and contributions, telling that the coal miners, on account of no work, were in destitute circumstances.

The suffering is, indeed, intense. The women and children of the men who have been digging coal for the comfort of others for years are without heat. They need food. They need clothing.

They need every penny of aid that they can get.

(LABOR AGE readers should send funds for West Virginia relief to H. O. Franklin, Treasurer, Miners' Relief Committee, Box 138, Charleston, W. Va.)

Labor Opinion

Expressions by the Labor Press on the "Industrial Court" Idea

"CAN'T STRIKE" LAWS

(International Molders' Journal, February, 1922)

The right of a free man to work includes the right to refuse to work, and when a State Legislature, or the Federal Government enacts a law making it illegal for workmen to quit their employment collectively, the state, or the Federal Government, has endeavored to re-establish a form of slavery which would absolutely destroy the wage-earner's power to protect himself from unjust, greedy and conscienceless employers.

Slaves who could not read or write, who had not been nourished on the traditions of freedom and human liberty, revolted when the punishment for revolt was death instead of imprisonment. The workman of today, informed as he is, understanding his rights and understanding as well his necessities and his obligations, will not consent to work when his emplyoment becomes intolerable.

The miners of Kansas struck in violation of Governor Allen's "can't strike" law. The packing house employees in Colorado struck in violation of the Colorado "can't strike" law. And, if we understand the wage-earners of every English-speaking country, or every civilized country, for that matter, they will not remain at work when conditions become intolerable.

"CAN'T STRIKE" LEGISLATION IS BASED ON "SUPERIOR CLASS" IDEAL

(Organized Labor, January 14, 1922)

The "can't strike" wave has again struck New York, and powerful business interests in that state are demanding this legislation.

As usual, power and greed is blind to history and present-day experience. England's "can't strike" record is forgotten, the collapse of this system in Australia is ignored, and today's turmoil and dissension in Colorado and Kansas mean nothing to those who would handcuff workers to their jobs.

Rhetoric, sophistry and legalisms fail to conceal the viciousness of this proposal. Its one-sidedness is apparent to any open-minded citizen. It not only fails of its purpose, but it engenders contempt for all law. Workers might be forced into obedience, but they cannot be convinced that they must labor against their will in a land dedicated to freedom.

DEFENDING CONSCRIPT LABOR

(The New York Call, February 13, 1922)

The New York Commercial carries a contribution from Judge J. A. McDermott, of the Kansas Industrial Court, in defense of the "code of principles" embodied in the Kansas legislation. It is likely that this appears at this time for the influence it may have in supporting the labor conscription bill before the New York Assembly.

The very first principle mentioned by the learned judge reads: "Coal is a public utility, and in its production and distribution the public interest is predominant." Now, then, if coal is a "public utility," why should it be privately owned? The question never occurs to the judge. His idea is that coal should remain a public utility and be privately owned, with the addition of conscript labor provided for the private owners by the state.

If the manufacturers, bankers and their political tools in this state have their way they will also conscript the labor of the state for the profits of the owners of industry. It rests with the workers of the state to avert the danger that faces them in the bill that receives the hearty approval of J. P. Morgan and his financial cronies.

ARE STRIKES RIGHT OR WRONG?

(The New Age, February 16, 1922)

The common law in so far as it applied to trade unions and strikes has been repealed or amended by the English long ago. The "Seven Men of Dorset" incident can never happen again. It is about time that so-called American papers stopped talking about English common law—decrees of Norman-French and English Kings from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries—it has little or no place in the complex life of this country and age. Economic necessity comes first. All laws bend or break before the relentless march of economic forces and necessity. Conditions are forcing the miners and the railroad unions to combine, and they will federate and ultimately amalgamate into one great union, and will even act in concert with other unions. To try to frighten the unions into staying out of combinations by calling such action treasonable is about as silly and as futile as the trust-busting campaigns of the Knight of the Big Wind, Roosevelt. The combination proposed by Lewis, of the miners, to the rail and shop unions, if anything, is overdue. We should have had it ten years ago.

A WALL STREET INDUSTRIAL COURT

(Tom Mooney's Monthly, February, 1922)

President Harding, in his message to Congress, urged upon it the adoption of an Industrial Court for the United States in these words: "It should be possible to set up judicial or quasi-judicial tribunals for the consideration and determination of all the disputes that menace the public welfare."

In other words, a Kansas Industrial Court for the entire United States. Then every state and every city in this country will have its Howat and Dorchy, and rightly so, for they who fail to attack such a law in its infancy will in the end become slaves to its rule. Organized labor should make such a terrific campaign at once in every union hall and in every labor and progressive paper in this nation that will let Wall street know in no uncertain terms that to try to put across such a slave-dealing device will result in instant revolt upon the part of every organized wage-worker in America.

Waists and Wastes

A Little Story of the Ladies' Garment Industry

By McALISTER COLEMAN

THIS is for the ladies. It is for them to ponder over the next time the all too-sweet saleswoman says:

"Only $39.50, and, my dear, it's like giving it away at that price. So lucky you came in today, for these dresses were $45 yesterday, and the only reason we're marking them down now is that we just have to make room for our spring stocks."

You know the rest. Sometimes in sheer desperation you take the "bargain" home and begin to wear it, and in a very short time, indeed, you commence wondering where in all the world they could have put $39.50 worth of service, workmanship and design into that thing of rags and tatters now so rapidly reverting to its primitive shoddy.

The Tax Collector

The answer is, of course, that the price the saleswoman quoted bears about as much relationship to the value of the article to you, the consumer, as a Broadway musical show bears to the art of the drama. All the way along the line, from the time it was just a bolt of goods, that dress of yours has paid tribute to capitalism's Great God Waste.

In China today the powers refuse to allow the Government to place an adequate tariff upon imported goods. But the Chinese are a resourceful people. They have invented a way of collecting taxes that causes the importer to rage, but which is, nevertheless, highly efficacious. It is called the "likin" tax. A bale of goods is started towards the interior, with the importer congratulating himself on the ridiculously low tariff he has had to pay. Presently, however, a provincial boundary is reached and the goods convoy halted by a band of extremely polite Chinese, armed with extremely efficient rifles. There follows an elaborate ceremonial of bowing and scraping, and eventually the bale-owner is courteously informed that a "likin" tax is in order. This he pays, offering up a silent prayer that Heaven may smite these exquisite bandits dead. The procession starts again, and at the next boundary line the ceremony is repeated. In very much the same manner, your dress has been levied upon by those who have in no way contributed to its final value as a dress. Year in and year out, you are paying "likin" to business men bandits.

The Cost of Labor Turnover

To be explicit, here are a few of the many wasteful practices which are open secrets, to every one in the industry, and which contribute their quotas to keeping up the price of women's apparel:

1. An extraordinarily high labor turnover, due to seasonal depressions. Labor turnover goes into overhead costs, and is variously estimated at from $25 all the way up to $250 per worker. This cost must be met somehow, and it is naturally passed on to the consumer.

Rightly or wrongly, the leaders of the industry consider themselves so dependent upon styles that the women's wear business finds itself one of the highest in ranking in periods of unemployment. This means that every so often thousands of men and women are turned out upon the streets to find other occupations for themselves or subsist upon the savings from their wages until work for the next season begins. The unions have insisted, and rightly, that account be taken of this periodic unemployment in the fixing of wages, but one can easily imagine the state of mind of the workers who realize that immediately after a few weeks of employment they will be set adrift again to shift for themselves. Obviously, as long as styles and seasons govern the selection of women's clothes there will always be some seasonal depression, but obviously, also, this can be overcome to a certain extent by the process known as "dove-tailing." Dove-tailing means manufacturing staple lines out of season. It is being done to some extent by a few progressive manufacturers, but there is not nearly enough of this off-season work.

I have in mind an acquaintance, a young and progressive manufacturer, who started in to trade-mark and manufacture a line of women's sports clothes in the off-seasons. One of his objects was to hold together the skilled workers

in his shop and cut down labor turnover. Instantly he ran into the opposition of all his older competitors. They did what they could to put him out of business. To be sure, his success would not have affected them, but they told him that he "was establishing a dangerous precedent." It can be definitely established that the scientific training of workers pays handsomely in the long run, but the bulk of manufacturers prefer the old-fashioned methods of trial and error, passing on the extra costs that these methods involve to the ultimate purchaser of the dress.

2. "Trading down" and deliberate cheapening of fabrics, linings and findings for the sake of meeting a price. While at first glance this might appear to reduce prices, as a matter of fact, this skimping in materials actually has little effect on the final price, and works only to shorten the life of the garment. The few cents saved here and there in the complicated bargainings between buyers and manufacturers and sub-manufacturers and contractors and jobbers and resident buyers and all the army of commercial dependents that batten on the industry, show only a fraction of a cent saving by the time the garment is offered to the customer, and really mean a great depreciation in the wearing value of the garment.

When a Manufacturer Is Not a Manufacturer

3. "Outside work." There are manufacturers in this amazing industry who are not really manufacturers at all, in the sense that they fabricate anything. They have perhaps a few machines, but the bulk of their work is let out to the sub-manufacturer, who gets his goods, cut or uncut, from the manufacturer or contractor and makes them up in an outside plant. The sub-manufacturer does not necessarily have his money advanced, and in this he differs from the contractor, who always receives the goods cut up, and who always has his money advanced. Again, the manufacturer need know nothing about distribution methods. In most instances the selling is done entirely by jobbers, who take the whole output of factories. Although in this industry it is difficult to discover even the conventional reasons that are given for the existence of the jobber or middleman, i. e. the rendering of warehouse service, national merchandising, etc., those who know will tell you that the jobbers are coming to control the industry. Even the layman can appreciate the fact that when a garment has gone such a tortuous course, with every one taking toll, a very substantial sum has been added to the final cost.

Outside work and jobber control have taken such a firm grip upon the industry that today in New York City alone 55,000 workers in the cloak lines are employed in 2,800 shops. Why not in 200 shops? Imagine the colossal saving to the consumer.

The Art of "Creating" Designs

4. Cheapening of the art of design by slavish imitation. "Designer" is a fine, soul-satisfying word that brings to mind the patient craftsman in his studio or workshop, the creative spirit of the days of the old guilds and all that sort of thing. As a matter of fact, the run of designers in the business today would be more at home in a private detective's office than a workshop. They seem to consider that they have done their jobs and justified the high salaries paid them when they have gone sleuthing in various disguises along Fifth Avenue. Once their eyes light upon a design in a smart Fifth Avenue shop they come galloping back to the manufacturer in a fine frenzy. Then the machines start up and inevitably the one or two really workmanlike details of construction that gave the original gown its distinction are omitted, because it is cheaper to omit them, or because the designer's hurried glance failed to appreciate them. Finally, the finished garment is on the model ready to be photographed for the catalog and taken out by the champing salesmen. In bursts the designer with a brand-new model—"a sure hit this time"—"it will knock the hicks for a gool." He has just seen it in Madame Blah's show-rooms, and the first model is thrown in the discard and the whole show begins again. Cost money? Well, rather. But what's the difference? We must have the latest and the consumer will always pay.

High Cost of Retailing

5. Outrageously high costs of retailing. This subject deserves a separate paper to do it justice. Look over the competitive advertising in your evening paper. Figure the money spent on store rents, lighting, window-trims, "fixin's" that add nothing to the service the store might render, but are various forms of come-ons and pullers-in, and you will realize why the average department store cannot handle a ready-to-wear dress, for example, at anything less than 50 per cent profit "and make it worth while," and

why a specialty shop must have a hundred per cent, and even higher profit.

Those "Union Fellers"

And for all of this you ladies pay. What do the manufacturer and sub-manufacturer and contractor and jobber and resident buyer and commission resident buyer and retail buyer and retail advertising expert and retail window-trimmer—what do they all say in one long breath when you ask them what is wrong with the women's wear industry? That's easy. The answer is always the same, "Labor and the ladies." They tell you, without smiling, that seasonal depressions that send thousands on thousands in this industry out onto the streets for weeks every year in search of other occupations to tide them over until the next season are due to "labor agitators," "union fellers," who must call strikes every so often to keep their jobs. Now, as a matter of fact, everyone who knows the Labor Movement from the Movement to Abolish the Dumping of Garbage on Riverside Drive, knows that the various costumes unions have done more to advance the cause of constitutional government in industrial relations than any other group in the country. They have shown a readiness for conference that is amazing, in view of the provocations they have faced. No matter what his views on labor in general, I have never met an informed person who did not speak with the highest regard of the integrity and intelligence of the leaders of labor in this industry. One need only mention their names to be certain of this inevitable tribute.

It's Up to the Ladies

So it seems to be up to the ladies. Is it true, then? Do you really want the industry that clothes you to be in this state of constant upheaval? Are you really anxious to support a small host of middlemen so that they may go home to their Upper West Side apartments every night in their limousines? They tell us that it is because you are so insistent on having nothing but the latest and smartest that the seasonal production charts look like a relief map of the Rocky Mountains.

But mayn't it be a fact that you are making no such ridiculous demands upon the industry as the manufacturers and sub-manufacturers and designers and all-too sweet salesladies would have us believe? How, for example, do these amiable souls explain the trend towards ready-to-wear sports clothes where style is not the largest factor, where comfort and wear count a bit as well? How about the fact that the alert editors of women's magazines which have any considerable circulation are cutting down the number of their fashion pages and putting in more reading matter about affairs of the world in general? How about the fact that almost all magazines edited for women only are falling off in circulation? Do they suppose that women in industry and business are so intrigued by getting something that is the very latest and smartest and all the rest that they don't care a rip how long it lasts?

Some of these questions no one but a woman can answer. The writer does not pretend to be a "style-expert." It is merely his humble opinion that the style-experts aren't what they claim to be, and that what the women's wear industry needs right now is expert advice of another sort. It needs, for example, to justify some of the prices it has been charging, some of the practices it has been indulging in.

Some day the workers will take this industry over on a co-operative basis. Speed that day. But until it comes there is no law against making dresses at home, no reason why any one should pay prices for clothes that she is satisfied are created by wasteful, greedy and short-sighted methods.

Psychology and the Workers

The Instincts—Hunger

By PRINCE HOPKINS

IN the articles that follow we shall examine the implications to the working-class movement of today of certain specific instincts, such as those connected with hunger, greed and sex. We shall use these words in the broadest sense; for under the term Hunger, we shall treat of physical hunger, "intellectual hunger" and "spiritual hunger." We shall act on the assumption that the usage of language, which gives to these different impulses a name in common, implies that they have actually some mental kinship.

The Hunger Drive

Physical hunger, obviously, is the earliest evolved and most important of animal urges. The strength of our impulses is largely proportionate to the length of time that they have inhered in the race. Hence the strength of hunger, which in children is almost orgiastically strong and which at times drives starving men so that they lose their later-acquired social tendencies and even revert to cannibalism.

In modern industrial society, the strength of this drive is seen continually. When the usual security of "three squares" is taken away by the threat of unemployment, the average man finds it difficult to keep his peace of mind or to think of anything else than the impending disaster. For this reason it becomes increasingly necessary for mankind so to reorganize its social machinery that every worker may be sure of at least the bare necessities of life. The doctrine, "He who will not work, neither shall he eat," must be modified somewhat, even though by so doing society is put to the necessity of giving a minimum support to a few drones. For mankind must no longer be subjected to the paralyzing fear that we or our loved ones may be unable in the near future to satisfy the powerful drive—Hunger.

Such a fear not only prevents us from putting forth the best work of which we are capable, but it often makes us submit to gross injustices rather than to risk the loss of a job. Chiefly through the power of this terrible fear, injustice has been able to maintain its place in the saddle, from the time when Khufu, pharaoh of Egypt, drove his slave-gangs to build the great pyramid, down to the present day, when "no one in Texas discusses public questions above a stage whisper."

Hunger and Revolution

And yet, strangely enough, this same drive, Hunger, the great ally of tyranny, is also the urge which, in the last extremity, goads the worm to turn, and the long-suffering masses to rise in violence against a regime which will no longer permit them to live. Unhappy is the people, however, who delay their revolution until the time when hunger has taken from them almost their last ounce of morale and of industrial strength, and goaded them to violence.

Such revolutions are always more or less abortive. The French and the Russian revolutions will undoubtedly be cited in disproof of this statement. But didn't both of these revolutions find that the ground had been insufficiently prepared for the regimes which they ushered in? And, in both cases, didn't the revolutionaries have to withdraw from most of the territory which they so triumphantly set out to occupy? What other nation is as menacing to the world's progress today as is France? Russia has still saved something from the ruins of her revolution, partly because she is pinning her faith to a Lenin instead of to a Napoleon. But what radical has not been dismayed at the concessions, which have had to be made first in respect to liberty, and then in respect to communism? Hunger brought the Russian revolution before the people were prepared to understand it. Hunger again, under the allies' blockade and the failure of the crops, prevented the development of the measures that the soviet had under weigh.

Fortunately such famines as today exist in Russia and China,—and existed during the war in India,—are less frequent than they were in the railroad-less ancient world.

Hunger for Knowledge

The hunger of the well-fed man may be of some other kind than the physical. I shan't even claim here that what we call "hunger for information" is generally a sublimation of physical hunger. Professor Sigmund Freud, the originator of Psychoanalysis, has shown that such hunger

often proceeds from quite another instinct. There is, however, enough similarity to physical appetite in the desire for intellectual "food," to justify us in considering the subject here.

The young of all the higher animals are provided with an inordinate curiosity to understand the world into which they've been born. In this quest, they're found nosing around in all kinds of places. In the human young, this capacity for acquiring knowledge through experience is supplemented by the propensity for asking innumerable questions. Schools for children like those of Tolstoy or that at Stelton, N. J., in which the child determines for himself what use he'll make of his time, show, that children in a favorable environment, without any forcible guidance, will equip themselves with the facts needed for life. By virtue of the freedom given in such schools, they are likely to develop a higher intelligence than children of similar capacities who go through the conventional schools. However, a potent reason exists why such schools aren't looked upon with favor by the ruling powers; and that is, that where the child is left free to gather facts from his own observations, he's fairly certain to become critical of existing institutions, and, later, as a citizen who thinks, to oppose the privileges of the upper class.

Thus ruling groups develop a general skepticism concerning all freedom of enquiry and non-authoritarian methods. Even the working class is often permeated from above with this philosophy,—although labor has reason to be most friendly to freedom. Frequently I've talked with workers who took violent exception to any but a dogmatic stand with children against the conventional religious and economic theories. They failed to see that dogmatism breeds resentment and opposition; and that freedom, on the contrary, can't in the long run undermine anything but falsehood. Dogmatic states of mind are evidence that the dogmatist isn't quite sure of his ground. We can understand dogmatism in those who try to uphold the present unjust regime; but in progressive thinkers, dogmatism implies failure to ground themselves in the full strength of their case.

The Right Kind of Intellectual Food

The radical press gives to the workers a means of securing intellectual "pure food." The minds of the workers crave sustenance just as surely as do their bodies. Unless the working class can provide itself with such food, many of their hungry brothers will gorge on the products sold them in schools, colleges and press subsidized by the master class.

The Roman Catholic Church, which has always been wise in its generation, long ago recognized that children of its congregations must be encouraged to attend parochial rather than state-supported schools, if they wish to retain an enthusiastic interest in their church. State schools are inclined to over-emphasize the authority of the state and the sanctity of the privileges enjoyed by those who today control that state. Church-controlled schools, on the other hand, will necessarily be interested primarily in the welfare of the church. Only labor-controlled schools can be counted upon to champion primarily the interests of the working class.

Spiritual Hunger

We pass now to that third kind of hunger, which, for want of a better name, I have called "spiritual hunger." By this term I imply no theological hypotheses. I mean simply that feeling which all men at times have, of an emptiness which is not that of the physical organism, nor, in any ordinary sense, of the intellect, a hunger that neither possession and enjoyment of material things, nor yet any comprehension of the science of them, will ever entirely satisfy. It is perhaps best defined as the hunger after those satisfactions which are most nobly human, as distinguished from those which we share with the brutes.

The thing that comes nearest to satisfying the spiritual craving of an increasing number of men and women is the forgetting of one's self in service of one's fellow-workers. Spiritual hunger is the hunger, not so much to receive, as to give out. Let all who would assuage it unite to create a world in which the emphasis is not put upon the lowest appetites which we share with the beasts, but upon those aspirations that are most distinctively human. Let us supplement this by reading of poetry and literature that has an inspirational effect upon us, and by the companionship of living friends who have an influence over us, as well as of those friends whom we meet through the pages of books. Let us test the quality of their nourishment to the "spirit," not by their narcotic effect, their ability to make us forget that anything is wrong with this world, or direct our attention from it to an alleged "next world," but by the degree in which they strengthen us in the struggle for human progress.

(This is the third of Mr. Hopkins' articles.)

How British Labor Plans to Curb Unemployment

By ARTHUR GREENWOOD

THE economic paralysis which has spread throughout the world has created an almost unprecedented volume of unemployment. Great Britain is suffering in common with other countries. At the end of August, 1921, over a million and a half workers were registered as totally unemployed at the Employment Exchanges, and 408,000 were only partially employed. About 290,000 workers had exhausted their benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Acts, and were not eligible for further benefits for several months.

The contributory insurance scheme provides for benefits of 15 shillings per week for men and 12 shillings for women, but these sums are inadequate to stave off distress. Large numbers of people are constantly appealing to the local Boards of Guardians for Poor Law Relief, and enormous sums have been distributed for the sustenance of the workless and their dependents.

Local taxation has increased as a consequence. Prices are still high. Discontent is growing and may rapidly assume menacing proportions unless the Government shows itself capable of handling the situation and bringing forward constructive proposals.

The Failure of Allied Statesmanship

The root causes of the present situation are to be found in the failure of the Allied statesmen to diagnose the problem with which they were faced on the termination of hostilities. Political and military considerations drove into the background the vital economic realities of the post-war world, and no real effort was made to deal with the gigantic problem of economic recuperation. In the meantime, and even before the war had ended, the British workers had repeatedly pressed for adequate preparations against the period of hard times in January, 1917, at its annual conference, and again in August, 1917, and February, 1918, the Labor Party outlined plans for the prevention of unemployment.

Lloyd George Fails to Act

The end of the war, however, found the Government with no policy. Early in 1919 labor introduced a Prevention of Unemployment Bill into the House of Commons. This was defeated in the second reading, however, by the votes of Mr. Lloyd George's supporters, who declared that an Industrial Conference, about to be called, would give the matter consideration.

In February, 1919, the Prime Minister convened a conference of representatives of workers and of employers. He told the conference that "there is a general feeling that something must be done to suppress it (unemployment), to destroy it, to eliminate it forever out of the lives of the workers." The conference appointed a joint committee which, in April, 1919, submitted far-reaching proposals for dealing with the problem along the same lines as were laid down by the Labor Party. Although Lloyd George had led the conference to believe that these proposals would be carried out, the only step taken was the passage of the amended Unemployment Insurance Act.

Both the Labor Party Conference and the Trades Union Congress, in 1919, returned to this question, and in September, 1920, a Joint Labor Committee emphasized the importance of financial and commercial measures for the restoration of normal international trade. This was followed by agitation in the House of Commons and the sending of deputations to the Prime Minister, and by further resolutions at an emergency congress in December.

During this time the boom in trade was gradually giving way to grave depression. The Government became alarmed and invited British labor to join a committee to report on unemployment. But British labor in the past had had bitter experience in co-operating with the Government. It declined the invitation and formulated its policy.

Labor's Program

This policy may be summed up in a phrase—work or maintenance. Either there must be work, or the unemployed must be maintained. The statement is simple; the practice, complex,

necessitating as it does, forethought during times of normal economic activity. A satisfactory unemployment policy cannot be improvised after the onset of a trade depression, and so far no Government has made the necessary preparations beforehand.

The view put forward by the British labor movement is that under the existing organization of the world's economic life, recurrent periods of trade depression are inevitable. So long as the present system remains, the best that can be done is to hold back certain orders for commodities and services when trade is normal or unusually good, and to place them when trade begins to decline. But with the present structure of industry and the existence of a multitude of employers, the only possible way of carrying this policy into effect is for national and local public authorities to consider their requirements on a ten years' program and to vary their orders for stores, equipment and buildings with the state of trade, reserving as great a proportion of their order as possible for periods when private demands are falling off.

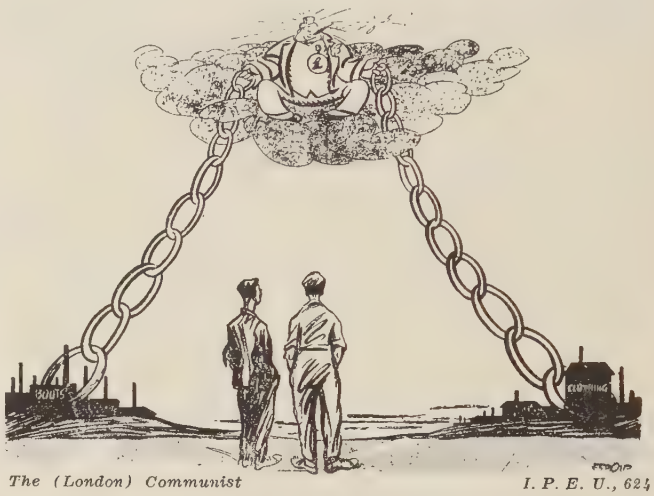
Public Demands Must Be Regulated

In practice it would mean that public authorities would postpone their orders for material and services as far as possible until times of slack trade; and that public schemes of afforestation, road building and improvement, harbor development, and the erection and renovation of public buildings, for example, should be accelerated during a period of unemployment and retarded during times of prosperity. Labor's program does not suggest that the unemployed should be put to work at quite useless tasks at great expense to the public, or even that they should be employed on useful public works at jobs which they can only perform inefficiently. Skilled boot operatives or tailors' cutters will not be asked to dig the foundations of new roads. The object is to provide the maximum of employment for workers at their normal occupations. And public requirements are so varied in their character, ranging from post-office, stores and telephone equipment to office furniture and stationery, that they provide employment for workers in very many industries. These workers, with purchasing power intact, would, in turn, assist in maintaining the demand for goods in other industries.

Juvenile workers in industry should, as far as possible, be withdrawn from employment and provision made for educational training. School children should be kept at school even beyond the age when they are legally entitled to leave, their families, where necessary, securing compensation for loss entailed.

Jobless Must Be Maintained

Those for whom work is still not available must be maintained. Already there is in Britain a compulsory scheme of unemployment insurance, first established in 1911 and since extended. Under it, contributions are made by workers, employers and the state. At the present time the rates of benefit bear no relation to a worker's responsibilities. The single man receives as much as a married man with dependents. Moreover, the benefits are not a sufficiently generous scale to prevent serious hardship. Finally, the benefit is payable only for a limited number of weeks, after which there ensues a period when unemployed workers receive no further assistance unless they appeal to the Boards of Guardians for poor relief—a course of action which is repugnant to the working class, because of the stigma which attaches to public assistance in this form.



The (London) Communist *I. P. E. U., 624*

MAN PROPOSES: THE BOSS DISPOSES
Bootmaker—If I'd a job I'd buy some clothes.
Clothing Worker—If I'd a job I'd buy some boots.

The British Labor Party and Trades Union Congress insist that public provision for the unemployed should be made through the machinery of the Unemployment Insurance Acts, that the benefits should be adequate and should include payments for dependents, and that the benefits should continue as long as a person is unemployed. Coupled with this policy is the proposal that educational facilities should be afforded to unemployed workers at educational institutions.

Must Extend Credit to Europe

Late in 1921 labor became increasingly insistent on the demand that credit be extended the impoverished countries of Europe as the only effective means of reviving international trade. This proposal was set forth by the Joint Committee of the political and industrial wings of the movement. The situation in many European countries is such that though there is an undoubted need of the products of British labor, these countries are unable to provide goods in payment. It is universally recognized that credit must be supplied to the impoverished countries of the Continent and the labor manifesto outlines proposals designed to provide both credit for foreign countries and employment for British workers. Under the labor scheme the Government would place substantial orders for staple commodities for which there is an ascertained demand, at prices covering costs, including overhead charges and a margin for contingencies. Employers would not, therefore, receive their normal profits on these orders, but it would be to their advantage to support a scheme which would keep their plant and workers employed and assist in restoring trade. The Government would export the commodities produced to the Continent of Europe on credit, dealing either direct with other Governments, with co-operative societies or with other organizations able and willing ultimately to pay for the goods.

This plan, it is claimed, would maintain the morale and efficiency of the people, keep a large proportion of the machinery of production in working order pending the return of normal trade, strengthen the home demand for goods, assist the economic recovery of certain European countries, and save enormous sums of money now paid out in the form of unemployment benefit and poor relief.

Employment on Public Works

Further, the Government and local authorities should press forward schemes of public utility likely to stimulate production. If a large number of men are employed on road making, for example, they are performing useful work and earning wages, the spending of which will maintain or increase the demand for the necessaries of life; but clearly insurance benefits would do the same. If, however, men are put to work relaying tramway rails which are worn and preparing for the extension of a local tramway system, the effect is to provide employment and wages, and, in addition, to increase the demands for rails, which will increase employment in the iron and steel trades. These trades in their turn would increase the demand in other trades, notably the coal industry.

The labor plan proposes that both the Government and the municipal and county authorities should consider schemes of work from the point of view of the influence their operation will exert on the industries of the country, and give preference to those schemes which, while offering employment to unemployed workers, will create a further demand for labor.

Labor the One Hope

The labor movement has endeavored to grapple with the realities of the situation. The Cabinet wishes to do the least possible to save its face; organized labor is desperately anxious to do the most that can be done to lift the burden of suffering and privation from the working population. As the *Manchester Guardian* says, "the most obvious difference between the two is that the labor men really want to get as many of the unemployed at work as possible, and the Mond Committee are concerned with getting themselves and the Government out of a hole. To the Government Committee unemployment is a tiresome mischance; to the labor men it is a spectre of want and misery." The price of the unemployment crisis will be paid in human suffering, in the dissipation of scanty savings, in the destruction of homes, and by a heavy draft upon the health, vigor and efficiency of the workers. But the British labor movement, learning by its bitter experience, will go from strength to strength. The present crisis can but hasten the end of coalitionism and bring nearer the inevitable rise to power of British labor.

The Month

By HARRY W. LAIDLER

Labor in America

ORGANIZED labor during late January and early February took the offensive in many industries in their fight against reduced wages and increased hours. The miners started a vigorous campaign for an alliance between the 2,000,000 workers in the mining and railroad industries in order the better to cope with the present situation. The railroad workers joined with numerous labor organizations and radical and progressive groups in an effort to develop common political action among the labor forces of America, while the Amalgamated Clothing Workers began a campaign for a national reserve fund, to be used in time of emergency.

The Miners Appeal to Railroad Workers

IN late January John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, sent letters to officers of the sixteen railroad unions inviting them to confer with the miners' officials "at the earliest possible date." The invitation stated that both the railway men and the miners were faced with unwarranted reduction in wages, and that, "in order to cope with this situation, and to successfully combat this frenzied hysteria, the mine workers are willing to pool their interests with the railroad organizations and stand with them in resistance to the proposed attacks on wage scales."

The movement for the alliance, according to Mr. Lewis, started at the miners' 1919 convention, when a committee was appointed to confer with the chiefs of the "Big Four." In July, 1920, the committee, after a conference, decided that the alliance was at that time inadvisable. In view of changed conditions, the invitation was again extended. Fifteen of the sixteen unions responded favorably, and the conference was set for February 21 in the city of Chicago. An alliance of the two groups would join together about 2,000,000 workers in these two most strategic industries of the country and make it impossible to put a wedge between these groups in the present critical situation.

No attempt was made at the conference to induce the railroad unions to declare a sympathetic strike in case of a miners' conflict.

The delegates drew up a memorandum, however, which declared that "the mutuality of the interests of the employees" in the railroad and mining industries "must be recognized and we assert our purpose to apply every honorable method to secure adequate standards of living."

When it becomes apparent that any one of its members is "a victim of unwarranted attacks, or its integrity is jeopardized," it will be the duty of the associations to meet to consider the situation. "Ways and means may then be considered and applied to best meet the emergency. Action taken under this section is subject to approval by each organization represented."

The conference appointed an executive committee composed of the chief executives of the associated organizations or their designated representatives. This committee will meet from time to time and make recommendations. The plan will become operative when ratified by each organization.

The Miners' Convention

TWO chief questions which occupied the attention of the United Mine Workers at the mid-February convention in Indianapolis were the question of wages, the expulsion of Howat. The convention voted that the bituminous miners should fight for the retention of their present wage scale, and that the anthracite miners should be supported in their demands for a 20 per cent increase; that their leaders should urge a six-hour day and a five-day week, and that there should be a general suspension of mining operations if no decision was reached with the owners. This suspension would be subject, however, to a referendum vote of their membership to be held before March 31.

The convention ratified the action of President Lewis in expelling Howat, by a small majority of 118 votes. Lewis secured 2,073, and Howat, 1,955. The six-hour day demand was vigorously opposed by the Lewis group as "suicidal," but won by a heavy majority.

* * *

The Shamokin convention of 145,000 miners in the anthracite district in Pennsylvania, held in late January, voted for an increase of approximately 20 per cent in the wages paid in that district, for the continuance of the check-off system and for an impartial investigation by the government of the entire anthracite industry. The convention upheld the administration in expelling members who violated their contracts, thus upholding Lewis in his fight against Lewis. President Lewis, chairman of the convention, declared that the miners were paid but $1 a ton for coal which sold in Philadelphia at $14.75, and that the entire cost of coal at the mines was but $1.75. "We do not expect to follow the non-union worker down the ladder of wage reductions to the morass of poverty and degradation which prevails below, and we do not propose to have the non-union yard-stick applied to our standards of living," he declared. In the meanwhile operators in the Pennsylvania and Ohio coal fields have posted notices of a new wage schedule carrying average wage reductions of from 31 to 45 per cent.

* * *

Again urging a thorough governmental investigation and calling upon Congress and the Federal Trade Commission for relief, John Brophy, president of District No. 2, vividly portrayed the condition of the Pennsylvania miners in an open letter to President Harding in early February. He declared in part:

"The miners of this district have averaged only from one to three days' work a week for nearly a year. Their resources, in the midst of winter, are vanishing. The present condition of thousands of our families should refute conclusively the reckless assertion of high war wages piled up by the miners. . . . The operators' only cry is that our wages must come down to the level of the non-union fields, even though they know that, should such a thing happen, the non-union wages would promptly sink to new levels, and we should be called

to drop again into a bottomless abyss. . . . Is the government helpless to evolve any plan for meeting the critical emergency of the miners? . . . Is the only noticeable motion of the government to be the measure taken when desperate miners rebel in strikes?"

The same bitter cry of hunger came from the mining districts of West Virginia. "Never in the history of the State," declared the president of the miners of the district, "has the suffering been as intense as now." Thousands of families have been evicted from their homes and left in the snow without food and means of transportation.

* * *

The miners' situation has led to a considerable number of Congressional bills. Senator Kenyon, in delivering his report on West Virginia, recommended the establishment of a Coal Board, similar to the Railway Labor Board, composed of three representatives of the employers, three of the workers and three of the public. He also urged that Congress pass an industrial code which should declare that coal is a public utility; that "human standards should be the constraining influence in fixing wages and living conditions"; that capital has a right to an adequate return on its investment; that operators and workers have a right to organize and to bargain collectively through men of their own choosing; that the organized miners should not harass their non-union fellows, nor should they be harassed by the operators; that the union has a right to organize in a non-union field, but that it has no right to induce workers to organize in violation of their contract with their employers; that six days a week shall be the standard week, and eight hours the standard day's work; that punitive overtime shall be paid extra and that "there shall be no strike or lockout pending a conference or a hearing and determination of the facts and principles involved. "The Kansas Industrial Court Statute, he declared, has proved futile.

Senators Phipps, Warren and Sterling went further than Senator Kenyon, and urged compulsory incorporation. Organized labor is opposed to both of these measures. In the House of Representatives, Meyer London demanded that the Committee on Mines and Mining start an immediate investigation of the coal industry.

* * *

Huerfano County, Colorado, miners were on strike against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, continued under martial law in late January. Representatives of the miners were denied entrance into the county, meetings of strikers were prohibited, criticism of military occupation forbidden, and censorship of newspapers established, according to the National Civil Liberties Union, in their protest to the governor.

The Brotherhoods Enter Politics

THE Railroad Brotherhoods made their first concerted move to bring about political unity among the labor and other progressive forces of the community in their call for a "Conference of Progressives," scheduled for February 20, at Chicago.

The invitation, sent to officials of labor organizations, the Socialist party, the Non-partisan League, the Committee of Forty-eight, the League for Industrial Democracy, and other groups, called attention to the tragic social conditions of the country. In a country of inexhaustible resources, it contended,

"We find the farmer unable profitably to market his crops, factories idle—with millions demanding their products, and the men and women who long to labor denied that inherent right. . . . All of the inherent rights of men guaranteed by our constitution are being rapidly destroyed by the agents of privilege. In legislative halls they pass laws to oppress. In the courts, by false construction, they assail those human liberties which the fathers sought to safeguard when they founded the Republic. These evils are the results of social and political maladjustments. There must be some fundamental economic principles that can be invoked to restore the opportunities of this nation to the people of the nation.

"There has been no common understanding to bind the workers of all walks of life together. For lack of this common understanding, we have been divided and betrayed. To the end that there may be a beginning of this wisdom which comes only through understanding, the sixteen standard railroad labor organizations, through the undersigned—their duly authorized committee—invite you to attend a conference . . . to discuss and adopt a fundamental economic program designed to restore to the people the sovereignty that is rightly theirs, to make effective the purpose for which our government is established, to secure to all the enjoyment of the gains which our industry produces. This is not an attempt to form a new political party. It is an effort to make use of those constructive forces already in existence, and, by co-operation bring about political unity."

The call was signed by William H. Johnston, of the Machinists, Chairman of the committee; Martin Ryan, of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen; W. S. Stone, of the Locomotive Firemen; E. J. Manion, of the Railroad Telegraphers; Timothy Healy, of the Stationary Firemen and Oilers, and L. E. Sheppard, of the Railway Conductors.

The conference, which met on February 20th and 21st decided not to advocate independent political action, but to try to capture the machinery of the old parties. It did not close the door, however, against independent action in the future. It adopted a declaration of grievances, denouncing the stifling of free speech, war profiteering, the return of the railroads to private control, American imperialism in Haiti, etc. It finally elected an executive committee of fifteen, and adjourned, until its next conference on December 11th. The Committee contained the following members: William H. Johnston of the Machinists; Warren S. Stone of the Locomotive Engineers; William Green of the United Mine Workers; Joseph A. Franklin of the Boilermakers; Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers; E. J. Manion of the Railroad Telegraphers; Agnes Nestor of Women's Trade Union League; Morris Hillquit of the Socialist Party; J. G. Brown of the Farmer-Labor Party; Mrs. Edward P. Costigan of the National League of Women Voters; George H. Griffith of the National Non-partisan League; Benjamin J. Marsh of the Farmer's National Council; and Frederic C. Howe, Edward Keating, and Basil M. Manly of the public group.

The Socialist group will cooperate to the fullest extent consistent with party principles, although they will not urge endorsement of the old party candidates.

The Railroad Labor Board Decides

THE Railway Labor Board opened the way for increased working hours on the railroad in two important decisions during the month. On January 22 the Board decided that railway clerks, freight handlers and express and station employees should not be entitled to time and a half for overtime until they had worked nine hours a day instead of eight, as formerly. It also announced a sweeping cut in wages, and permitted the railroads to employ men on "split" shifts in small towns where work can be done intermittently. The shop crafts, in their meetings in Chicago, rejected

Underwood and Underwood *I. P. E. U., 624*

THE BIG TEXTILE STRIKE

Opens in Pawtucket Valley, R. I. The answer of Governor Sans-Souci was riot guns and militia.

the seven rules laid down by the Board and started negotiations for new agreements.

On February 12 the Board dealt with signalmen in a similar fashion, re-establishing the ten-hour day at the usual hourly wages, and eliminating time and a half for regularly assigned work on Sundays and holidays. The basic eight-hour day, the Board contends, is retained in principle.

The proposal of Benjamin W. Hooper, of the Railway Labor Board, that the Board be empowered to enforce its decisions brought forth a heated reply from Samuel Gompers, at the convention of the National Civic Federation. Mr. Gompers contended that such power would take away the freedom of the workers.

Mr. Hooper declared that such power would be used primarily in the cases of the railroad officials, as they had flouted the decisions of the Board in cases too numerous to mention, while the railroad workers had violated the decisions in only one instance. The Board had thus far settled 1,222 disputes of all sorts. Secretary Hoover recently urged the re-establishment of regional conferences between the railroad executives and the men as a means of settling disputes.

During the month numerous conferences were held between railroad officials and the brotherhoods, preliminary to the submission of the controversies to the Railroad Labor Board. In each case the railroads demanded lower wages, and the men counter-claimed with a demand for higher wages. The matter was then taken to the Board. Many thousands of employees engaged in maintenance of equipment work were dropped by the railroads, with the announcement that henceforth the work would be given out to private contractors.

New England Textile Workers

THE wage reduction of 20 per cent and the proposed increase of working time from 48 to 54 or 55 hours by the mill owners of New England have led to a widespread strike among the textile workers of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. Federal investigators are trying to bring about a settlement. State troops have been sent out into several mill towns in Rhode Island "to quell the rioting strikers and their sympathizers." In Pawtucket several strikers have been killed and wounded by the authorities, in an attempt "to re-establish law and order."

The Amalgamated

THE total cost of the big strike of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers last spring was $1,971,838.69, according to the audit recently made by Secretary Monat of the New York Joint Board. Of this amount, 59 per cent, or $1,165,205, was spent directly for strike relief, and the remainder, for such administrative expenses as picketing, automobiling, legal expenses, bail bonds, hall rents, publicity, etc. The New York workers raised half this amount, the Chicago workers, $500,000. The International Ladies Garment Workers and other groups contributed liberally. The New York Joint Board still has a deficit of $267,297, which it is slowly wiping out. "On the whole," declares the report, "the strike was one of the greatest events in our history. Despite all the attacks upon our organization,

it has come out victorious because of the unshaken confidence fo our membership and because of the support, both financial and moral, of the national office and our membership in the cities."

The Amalgamated is now raising a huge national reserve fund against future conflicts. On February 14, the first conference was held in Chicago between the representatives of all the clothing manufacturers in Chicago and those of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. The employers demanded a 48-hour week, a 25 per cent decrease in wage, "freedom in hiring and firing," modification of the principle of equal division of work, and the abolition of the preferential union shop. Unless these demands were granted, the employers held, there could be no agreement. The demands were also those of the National Clothiers Federation, which represented the employers in Baltimore and Rochester.

President Hillman stated that lower wages and longer hours would not solve the problem of industrial depression and unemployment. The evil must be met by an employment insurance fund. The union demanded the establishment of such a fund, scales of wages for all workers and adjustment for underpaid sections. The conference adjourned with the decision to choose subcommittees to proceed with negotiations.

Dr. Leiserson, on January 28, sitting as arbitrator, announced a small wage reduction of a maximum of 10 per cent for 5,000 shirt makers affiliated with the Amalgamated.

The Needle Trades

FOLLOWING the successful strike of the cloakmakers in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the Dress and Waistmakers' Union, a member of the International, began an extensive campaign in late January for the organization of the non-union shops of New York. In the first two weeks of the campaign settlements were made in 100 shops, and other shops were settling daily. The drive was in part due to the threat of the employers to reduce wages 25 per cent, and to return to the piecework system when the present contracts expired. The Union is planning to raise a defense fund of $2,000,000.

President Benjamin Schlesinger, of the I. L. G. W. U., on January 24, urged a sweeping investigation of the women's garment industry of New York, in a letter to Secretaries Davis and Hoover. He particularly asked that the government examine "the profits of manufacturers and middlemen in the industry, and above all, profiteering by department stores and other retailers." It was estimated that the nine-weeks' strike of the International cost the workers $3,000,000 in wages and $1,000,000 in union expenses, while it cost the manufacturers approximately $10,000,000 in profits.

Labor Abroad

"The United Working Class Front"

THE most hopeful development during the last month in the European labor world has been the tendency toward the "united labor front."

On December 18, the Communist International Executive unanimously adopted a new policy which is likely to revolutionize the tactics of the communist groups "united working class front." Its sponsors declare, according to the London Communist, that the early revolutionary impetus of the period immediately following the war has vanished. "The working class find themselves faced with an economic crisis of increasing intensity, and a capitalistic offensive that has shattered their early hopes. This makes of greatest importance the immediate unity of all working class organizations in the fight against reaction. The Communist International, they assert, was necessary at the time it was founded, for the communists were unable to express themselves freely in the older organizations, and had to break these fetters. Effective freedom of revolutionary agitation has now been assured and the great need is unity of action against united capitalism."

"It does not matter how limited the demands of the workers may be. As long as they represent a genuine resistance to the capitalists, the conditions of the present will compel them to take on a revolutionary significance. Therefore the Communist International approves the demand for a united working class front. The Communist party in every country will enter into negotiations with every other working class organization (right, center or left) to establish a common fighting program. The Communist International is prepared to enter into negotiations with the Second International, the Two and a Half International and the Amsterdam International to establish a program of common action."

No agreement can be made, according to Moscow, which infringes the fullest liberty of communist expression and opinion. The right of separate propaganda must be insisted upon. The tactics are not new. In 1905 and 1910 the Bolsheviks entered into agreements with the Mensheviks, their bitter enemies, for a common front, and a similar need for unity is now apparent.

As may be imagined, this new pronouncement has caused heated discussion in the ranks of all of the Communist parties. The German and English Communists favor the new tactics, and are urging a rapproachement with the Socialist groups. The French Communists, however, who have just succeeded in splitting the Confederation of Labor, have thus far refused to take "dictation from Moscow" and change right about face.

The most significant step toward unity made by the representatives of the Second and the Second and a Half Internationals was the calling of the Paris Conference of February 5 and 6. During 1921 several groups had expressed their desire for the establishment of one International. The British Labor party at its Brighton Conference in June, the French Socialist party, at its Paris Convention in October, the Executive of the Second International in its November meeting in Brussels, the Executive of the Vienna Union, and the Executive of the Italian Socialist party in January, all had indicated their belief that the time had come for the joining of forces.

After a number of preliminary conferences, it was decided that the first conference to be held in Paris in early February should be made up of representatives from the five countries most directly affected by the terms of the Versailles Treaty and should center attention on the questions of reparations and disarmament.

Invitations were sent to the German Majority Socialists, Independents and Communists, to the French and Italian Socialists and Communists, to the Belgian and

British Labor parties, and to the British I. L. P. The Belgian and English Communist parties and the French "dissenters" affiliated with the Second International were not invited on account of their comparative unimportance.

Unfortunately the German railroad strike prevented the German Majority Socialists and Independents from attending, and the Italian crisis kept the Italian Socialists away. As the conference did not include all of the countries, the communists invited either refused the invitation or failed to reply. For two days representatives of the French, Belgian and British socialists—members of the Vienna and Second Internationals—discussed their future course of action. Vandervelde urged an early conference of the working classes of all nations with a view to the re-establishment of a single International. He felt that, preliminary to the negotiations with the Moscow International, a demand should be made for the liberation of the imprisoned Mensheviks and the re-establishment of political liberty in Russia. Furthermore, the parties affiliated with the Socialist Internationals should first come to an agreement. Tom Shaw of the British Labor party, speaking personally, felt that Moscow should first give guarantees of loyal collaboration and should express its agreement with a common set of principles. Friederich Adler, not a delegate, on the other hand, strongly opposed the laying down of any conditions for either the Second or the Third International, declaring that unity of action was of supreme importance. He was supported by Wallhead of England, who declared that all of the Internationals might be criticised for their actions in the past or present. "The differences between the Second International and the Vienna body diminish daily," he asserted, "and time will show a similar diminution in the differences between Moscow and the other Socialist parties." The conference approved the idea of an early conference of the three internationals as advocated by the Vienna Union—Vandervelde promising his support—and provided for a fresh conference in Frankfurt of the representatives from the five nations as soon as the German railroad conditions would permit.

In late January, the Vienna Union Executive stated that it would take the initiative in calling a wider conference of representatives of the three groups. "The conditions guaranteeing entrance to this congress," it asserted, "should be that all participating parties should stand for the principle of the class struggle, of the replacement of the capitalist system by the Socialist Commonwealth, and of the union of all proletarian parties for this object." The conference should consider the economic situation in all of its aspects.

Great Britain

A CLOSER unity between the trade union co-operatives and the Labor party of Great Britain is predicted in a recent issue of the British *Trades Union Review*. The article reads:

"The co-operative movement, representing the workers as consumers, the trade union movement as producers, and the Labor party which provides for the fullest expression of citizenship by political action, must be considered as three expressions of the same general working-class movement. It is quite probable that during 1922 steps will be taken to give effect to these sentiments by the development of a closer unity in the direction of organized effort and administrative control."

Labor ended the year with 1,834,000 registered unemployed, and 1,470,000, or 3 per cent of the population in receipt of poor law relief. "Our industries are paralyzed," declares the *Review*, "oversea trade is almost at at standstill, and the prospect of a trade revival is very remote." The export trade was about one-half that of 1913 and the import trade, about three-fourths. The year, however, gave to the workers a great lesson in the need for unity.

The number involved in labor disputes during the year were 1,824,000, about 200,000 less than in 1920. Of the 86,000,000 days lost by British workers, the miners lost over 72,000,000.

"One big union" for all of the transport workers employed by road, sea, rail or air was advocated in January by J. Marchbanks, the new president of the National Union of Railwaymen. If this were achieved, he declared, it would not be possible for one section of the movement to assist the employers when any other section was attacked. He declared that the railwaymen would stake everything on the maintenance of the eight-hour day. A recent reward of the National Railway Board reduced wages, declared for a modification of hours, and discontinued special payment for night work.

Printers, seamen, farm hands, garment workers, and workers in the building trades were all subjected to bitter attacks by the employing interests during the month.

* * *

The National Joint Council of the Trade Unions and the Labor party took an important step in early February in their appointment of a committee to inquire what forces are impeding maximum production, and to advise regarding the policy that should be applied toward those industries which cannot for the present be nationalized.

"That the only solution to the present difficulties affecting the export trade in coal from this country is the drastic revision of the treaty," is the belief expressed by the Labor party in their recent memorandum on Europe's economic collapse. The statement pointed out that, whereas England exported over 25,000,000 tons of coal to France, Germany and Russia in the eleven months ending November 30, 1913, it exported less than 6,000,000 tons in the corresponding months of 1921. One of the reasons for this falling off, according to Labor, is the fact that Germany is compelled to export to the Allied countries 22,000,000 tons of coal a year. The governments of France, Belgium and Italy, sell this coal to home consumers and re-export it at prices below those at which British exporters can profitably sell their coal.

The memorandum also urged that the German reparations be reduced in amount; that their payment be temporarily suspended; that the payments when they come be distributed according to needs, the restoration of the devastated regions of France and Belgium having priority; that the Allies promote an arrangement for the cancellation of the mutual indebtedness of the Allied and Associated powers; that the Russian government be recognized, and that an International Economic Conference be held at an early date.

Ireland

YOU are now called upon to fight . . . for the rights of men to live, and to live in abundance," declares the manifesto of the Irish Labor party and Trade Union Congress on January 11. "Henceforth your fight shall be against conditions which make your lives a perpetual struggle against sordid poverty, dirt and ignorance—a fight against the soul destroying grind of wage slavery." The manifesto continues:

"The republic conceived of and demanded by the workers is a republic in which those who give labor and service to the commonwealth and none but they are citizens . . . a republic in which wealth is the servant, not the master of mankind.

"Where free men and women and children are held to be the real wealth of the nation;

"Where none may be rich until all have enough;

"Where all who are capable and willing to work may find opportunity to work and are insured in exchange for their labor a decent livelihood."

Four counties in the South of Ireland were paralyzed by a rail strike in the first part of February, and frequent clashes occurred along the Tyrone border.

Germany

THE transportation system throughout Germany was tied up during the first week in February by one of the most extensive railroad strikes in the history of the country. The strike, declared by 20 out of 35 members of the Executive of the railroad union, was opposed by the General Confederation of Labor Unions, by the organs of the Social Democratic and the Independent Socialist parties, and by the government on the ground that negotiations with the government had not been concluded and that the strike would still further injure German credit. President Ebert warned the strikers and their instigators that they would suffer heavy jail sentences and fines up to 50,000 marks, and called on volunteer strike-breakers.

Despite this opposition and the arrest of several leaders, the strike spread until it included 200,000 railroad men throughout the country. On February 4, the employees of the telegraph, gas, electricity and water works in Berlin also struck, leaving Berlin without light or water. Food prices soared skyward, restaurants, theatres closed down.

However, on February 7, following negotiations with the government, the railroad strike was called off, on condition that the government refrain from reprisals in the form of wholesale discharges. The strike was caused by the fear of the railroad workers that the eight-hour day was endangered, and because of the government's refusal to consider a new wage scale. Passenger rates had just been greatly increased. The saddlers' union again expelled President Ebert for his anti-strike order, which raised a vital question concerning the elemental right of public employees to strike.

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